

CLIP 1:

That the strength of us as an organization not only is the capabilities of the motivated men and women who generate insights and knowledge that help ensure the security of this nation as well as our friends and allies but the fact that that insight is always generated within a legal framework. And that we are totally committed to adhering to that legal framework. It goes to our very ethos, it goes to our very culture

CLIP 2: Almost 60 years ago, in 1958, President Eisenhower marked the country's very first National Law Day by stating "The clearest way to show what, what the rule of law means to us in everyday life is to recall what has happened when there is no rule of law. Here at the National Security Agency our work gathering foreign intelligence sadly but perhaps inevitably exposes us to incidents of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, corruption in foreign governments, and thus we are perhaps more aware than most of what can happen when in Eisenhower's words, There is no rule of law." Because we recognize the vital role that the rule of law plays not just in the conduct of our own operations but the very security of our nation we take time each year to celebrate our own law day here at NSA.

CLIP 3:

Now in its 29th year, the NSA Law Day Celebration has become an opportunity to interact with colleagues across the agency and the federal government and to collectively reflect both on the importance of the rule of law in our society and on the critical role that attorneys and leaders within the Intelligence Community and elsewhere across the government all play in ensuring that the extraordinary legal authorities that we've been asked to execute for the nation's safety are properly and wisely discharged.

CLIP 4:

As you may know I've now spent two years as the General Counsel here. And I continue to be humbled by, and frankly in awe, of the extraordinary sense of mission and zeal for protecting our country that's displayed by, really, everyone in the agency. And that's accompanied by a scrupulous adherence to the many rules that govern our operations.

CLIP 5:

The importance of conducting all our activities, from the way we treat our workforce to the manner in which we safeguard our classified information and communications systems, to how we conduct our intelligence operations, all under the rule of law, has been an essential tenant of this agency since its establishment and it's even more crucial today.

CLIP 6:

I know that we have a lot of lawyers in the audience today. But I want to address you all as intelligence officers. Just as the Marines like to say, "every marine a rifleman," so to "every intelligence lawyer an intelligence officer." And the work you do and your agencies do to help us understand the threats that we face as a nation is essential.

CLIP 7:

It is frequently said that leadership plans and intentions are the hardest intelligence to collect. And that's right. And I would suggest we seldom need spies or broken codes, valuable as those are, to figure out what our enemies are up to. They tell us with our words, with their words and actions, for all the world to see. We just need clear-eyed thinking about human nature and the inherent logic of events.

CLIP 8:

It falls to us in the government, whether elected or career officials, to understand the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be, and to do what is necessary to protect our people against hostile powers, bent on our destruction. It's what our citizens expect of us. And it's the most fundamental reason they hire us in the first place. We have some specific challenges ahead of us this year, whether it's adequately funding our military and intelligence agencies or reauthorizing section 702. But an even bigger challenge is to think strategically, to question conventional wisdom, especially when that wisdom is comfortable and easy...when it suggests that war is not possible and our enemies will fight a fair war on the best possible terms for us if a war occurs. I have this obligation as a senator. You all have this obligation as intelligence officers. And for those of you who are also intelligence lawyers, you have the additional responsibility to assure your fellow citizens that your agencies conduct their missions in accordance with law.

CLIP 9:

I don't think most of the world appreciates how deeply the rule of law is part of the culture here as Admiral Rogers was describing. Everybody in this room knows that the public perception of uncontrolled intelligence agencies operating free from any legal constraints is wildly wrong.

CLIP 10:

But it was always clear to me, that regardless of the troubles and the criticism that NSA faced, often unfairly, this agency remained fundamentally committed to operating within the law. There aren't many organizations in or out of government that devote the kind of resources and high level attention to compliance that NSA does.

CLIP 11:

The agency's leadership, General Alexander and then Admiral Rogers; Chris Ingles and then Rick Ledgett; Fran Fleish and then Corin Stone, never wavered in their determination that the agency must follow the law. And the terrific lawyers here led by Vito, Matt, Raj, and now Glenn, all worked tirelessly to guide them in that respect. This agency's commitment to the rule of law should frankly serve as a model for the entire U.S. government. And I'm proud to say that I was able to contribute in whatever small respect to furthering that commitment and equally important, to emphasizing that commitment to the public.

CLIP 12:

More than almost any other nation, the rule of law is at the core of America's identity. Some countries find their national identity in a king, some in a religion, some in historical events, such as a war. Our identity is centered in legal documents, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. But respect for the law is a precious and fragile thing. It depends on the willingness of a nation's citizens to believe that the law is being fairly and evenly applied.